

THE BATTLE NEAR TOWAN

Japanese Won Victory Despite the Numerical Superiority of the Russians.

RIGID TEST OF THEIR VALOR

After an All-Day Fight the Jap Infantry Charged and Drove Off the Superior Force of Russian Troops.

General Kuroki's Headquarters in the Field, via Seoul, Aug. 1.—(Delayed in transmission.)—Yesterday's battle was the most important which General Kuroki's army has fought since crossing the Yalu. Many more Russians were engaged than in any former battle. They occupied an equally strong position, had much more artillery and were better acquainted with the country, having for a long time occupied the area over which the Japanese maneuvered. The Japanese victory won on this occasion, if not more important than that on the Yalu, was won against great odds and was consequently a better test of the mettle of their troops and more creditable to their valor. The result was that the Japanese gained 10 miles or more on their advance toward Liao Yang.

How far the Russians have retreated is not known yet, but only one strong strategic and defensive position intervenes between General Kuroki's army and Liao Yang, that being situated eight miles south of that city.

It is impossible to estimate the Russian casualties during the engagement and reports of losses on the Japanese side were not rendered this morning.

While the Russians and Japanese on this front are stretched over a long line of country, the Russians are known to have four divisions in the field between General Kuroki and Liao Yang and between that point and Mukden, a large proportion of the men being Poles from Europe. The theater of the part of the battle witnessed by the correspondent of the Associated Press was a valley beginning three miles from the Yangse pass. This valley, which is about 10 miles long, not more than a mile wide and running from north to south is level, covered with high corn, giving the troops fine cover.

In the morning the two armies were confronting each other across the valley. The Japanese army was stationed on ranges of hills fronting the pass, while the Russians had a higher range west of the valley. An artillery engagement began in the morning and lasted until 5 p. m., during which neither side appeared to gain any advantage so far as spectators could judge. The Russians now had batteries in the high hills beyond the village of Towan commanding the Liao Yang road which the Japanese shelled heavily all day from the front and left without silencing.

The Japanese artillery was handicapped in action by soft roads, which forced them to bring up ammunition by hand.

The Russians used 24 guns from Mo Tien pass.

The Japanese had two or more batteries in the hills and one or two batteries in the valley on the plain without any cover except the high corn, which the Russians never discovered, focusing all their fire on the batteries in the hills.

A spectacular and daring feature of the day was the advance of the Japanese infantry across the valley, which began at 5 p. m., and resulted in the occupation of all of the Russian gun positions and their infantry entrenchments in the space of two hours. The Russians, as usual, could not withstand the charges of the Japanese infantry and fled through the hills.

The appearance of the field this morning indicates a complete rout, the Russians leaving much clothing and camp paraphernalia behind them.

As a battery stationed just to the right of a tower in the village of Towan from which Lieutenant General Sakharoff, commander of the First Siberian army corps, witnessed the engagement, dashed down a hill in retreat, one gun was overturned and left at the foot of the declivity where it fell.

Complain of Extra Rate.

Boston, Aug. 9.—An investigation has been opened here by the interstate commerce commission, represented by Commissioner Charles A. Prouty, on complaint of the committee on transportation of commerce of the New England Shoe & Leather Association, charging discrimination on the part of the Merchants' and Mining Transportation Company in the matter of

shipment of shoes from interior points in New England outside of Boston to East St. Louis.

The explicit cause of complaint is that, although the transportation company published a freight rate on boots and shoes from interior points within a certain radius, which is the same as that from Boston, some manufacturers have been refused through bills of lading since June 1, 1902, and have been put to expense of paying the freight to Boston in addition to what was formerly the through rate.

FOREST FIRES CHECKED.

Loggers Stop Blaze That Rages Near Oak Point, Wash.

Oregonian: The fire demon struck the wrong camp in the Bunker hill camp of the Benson Logging & Timber Company, eight miles back from the Columbia at Oak Point, Wash. Hans Jensen, Roy Strong and Wesley Abraham, three loggers from that district, were in Portland yesterday morning and told a tale of hard fire-fighting in the green timber. They backfired, cut wide paths in the wilderness and felled timber before the raging torrent of fire until they checked it. If it had got away from them, the possibilities of damage were unlimited, as several tracts of timber of over 20,000 acres were directly in the path.

Their tale ends in the controlling of the fire. This was done Sunday night, when the blaze was less fierce on account of the dampness of night. Fortunately there was no wind or, as in the fire of two years ago on the Lewis river back of this district, it would have raged day and night without cessation. News from Cathlamet indicates that all danger is not over yet, however, not only to the Benson Company's timber but to that of the Weyerhaeuser Company, as well. But there have been 300 men fighting the flames with determination, and they have begun logging again.

"Fires are not likely to be so disastrous any more," said a timber-cruiser yesterday, "because timber is so valuable that as soon as a pile of brush catches fire the whole camp turns out to quench it. This has only been the case during the last few years, and 20 years ago it was quite the reverse. Then fires were allowed to burn fiercely as long as they did not affect somebody's fences. I have known the time when, in the dead of summer, with the whole country ready to kindle, men leaving an uninhabited part of the country would set a few fires to burn out a few thousand acres for a future hunting ground, where the deer could be seen easier. In those days the man who could burn the most timber was the best man. Now it is the reverse. All these fires that have been raging and then checked during the past few days were all about ready to enter the green timber, and some were in it, but they have been conquered. Timber has become so valuable that it will pay the owners of land to expend almost any amount for men to fight the fires."

Yesterday the atmosphere was clearer, all the fires within 50 miles of Portland being controlled. But still the forests are becoming drier daily, and the greatest precaution will have to be used in immediately quenching every fire set. The greatest danger, the logging companies say, is from incendiaries. A number of the big fires, threatened but checked in time, were undoubtedly of this origin. The Benson Company has offered \$500 reward for the man who set the fire on their tract at Oak Point. The fire at Clatskanie was caused by a spark from an engine.

TO EXONERATE AMMON.

The Convict Says Miller Offered to Rectify Wrong He Did.

"Colonel" Robert A. Ammon, now serving a term of four years and eight months in Sing Sing for his connection with the Franklin syndicate and

"\$20 per cent" Miller, who is also undergoing punishment, presented affidavits, through counsel yesterday, before Judge Newburger in general sessions, in an effort he is making for new trial, on the ground of the discovery of new evidence, says the New York Tribune. Three of the affidavits were of convicts, one being that of Ammon himself, another of Frank E. Cummings, and the last of John Goodwin-Williams.

The specific charge against Ammon was the larceny of \$30,000, which had been deposited with the Wells Fargo Express Company, and in relation to this money the petitioner wishes to present a copy of a letter, written to him by Miller under date of December 7, 1899, in which he directed Ammon to take charge of the money on deposit and invest it for him. Ammon states that the original of the letter was lost on the train on the way to Kingston, N. Y., by a lawyer to whom it had been submitted by Ammon's lawyer. Ammon further states that if he has a new trial, he will go on the stand, deny Miller's statements at the trial, and tell what he knows of the Franklin Syndicate.

Cummings relates that he talked with Miller while both were in the hospital at Sing Sing, and that Miller told him that he turned the \$30,000 over to Ammon for fear of its attachment. Williams' affidavit is practically a duplicate of that of Cummings.

Ammon states also that since January Miller has offered to make an affidavit, rectifying the wrong he had done to Ammon. "I sent back word to him that if he was willing to make a confession to the Rev. Frank Rees, chaplain of the prison, I would then be glad to have him make such an affidavit, but until he did so, I would not talk with him," says Ammon. Whether Miller made any such confession the affidavit does not say.

There is also a short affidavit from Mrs. Winifred F. Ammon, wife of Ammon. She swears that there was such a letter as her husband describes, written to him by Miller, directing her husband to take charge of the money. Assistant District Attorney Nott opposed the motion for a new trial on the ground that the petitioner knew of the existence of the letter at the time of the last trial. He had then an opportunity to be heard said Mr. Nott, "but did not choose to avail himself of the chance. This new move is simply to give him an opportunity to escape from the rigors of imprisonment, for he has nothing that is new to offer."

Judge Newburger reserved decision.

How Fast Do Birds Fly?

(St. Joseph News.)

William W. Murphy, a locomotive engineer on the Burlington's fast express between Hannibal and St. Joseph, has been making observations on the speed of various birds and insects. Many birds, he says, make a practice of flying beside or in front of his engine, and when the weather is clear and there is no wind he opens the throttle and races with them.

He finds that a chicken hawk and a crow can make 25 miles an hour. A turkey buzzard flies at the rate of 21 miles an hour. The pigeon is one of the fastest birds in the United States. It makes a speed of 46 miles an hour with ease. When chased by an eagle it can beat the Burlington's St. Louis

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express. The wild duck is traveling at the rate of 44 miles an hour while the hunter is pumping the contents of a repeating gun at it. The blackbird, robin, dove and other small birds travel at a speed of 38 miles an hour. The humming bird can and does excel a speed of a mile a minute. Murphy says that a humming bee the other day flew in and out of his cab window while he was going at the rate of 63 miles an hour. The performance lasted while the engine traveled a half mile.

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